

## **PROFILE OF SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS:**

In 2004-2005 San Diego City Schools enrolled 135,807 K-12 grade students; 22,500 (16.5%) are identified gifted and talented. The district employs 9,044 certificated employees; 2,248 (24.9%) are GATE certified. GATE programs are offered in 146 of the district's 177 K-12 schools. Programs are offered in every quadrant of the district and student enrollment in the programs represents the ethnic, economic, and language diversity of the total population enrolled in San Diego City Schools. The District plan and site plans are available in the GATE office and will be available in 2005-2006 at the District GATE Web site <<http://prod031.sandi.net/GATE2/>>.

### **SECTION 1: PROGRAM DESIGN**

**Districts provide a comprehensive continuum of services and program options responsive to the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students and are based on philosophical, theoretical, and empirical support. (EC 52205d and 52206a)**

**1:1 The plan for the district program has a written Statement of philosophy, goals, and standards appropriate to the needs and abilities of gifted learners.**

San Diego Unified School District Board of Trustees adopted in 1998 (revised in 2002, 2004, 2005) Administrative Procedures 4235 and 4236 which articulates the philosophy of and standards necessary for the district gifted program. The procedures define the students; curriculum and instruction; GATE program models and structures; classroom environment; teacher qualifications; and developmental needs addressed (academic, social, emotional).

The mission of the San Diego City Schools is to improve student achievement by supporting teaching and learning in the classroom. Within this larger district mission, the Gifted and Talented Education program, in keeping with the California legislative findings and intent, supports unique opportunities for high-achieving and underachieving pupils who are identified gifted and talented. By State definition, gifted students are pupils who possess a capacity for excellence far beyond that of their chronological peers. This capacity includes many varied characteristics that require modifications of curriculum and instruction. These form the basis of gifted and talented educational services. Programs include, as required by law, differentiated opportunities for learning; alternative learning environments at advanced ideological and creative levels commensurate with the students' potentials; and the development of sensitivity and responsibility to others, constructive ethical standards, realistic and healthy self-concepts, and self-generating problem-solving abilities.

The Statement of philosophy and goals is published on the San Diego City Schools GATE Web site <<http://prod031.sandi.net/GATE2/>>, in the Gifted and Talented Education Handbook for Administrators, Teachers, and Parents, in the Team Leaders Handbook, and in the program booklets provided to parents. *Meeting the Standards, A Guide to Developing Services for Gifted Students*, which delineates the California GATE State Standards, has been provided to schools.

San Diego City Schools offers two levels of gifted classes: Cluster (gifted) and Seminar (highly gifted), grades 3-12. The GATE Cluster program serves students who score at the 98<sup>th</sup> to 99.8<sup>th</sup> percentile on the Raven Progressive Matrices and at the 95<sup>th</sup> to 97<sup>th</sup> percentile with one or more factors (environmental/multiple school moves, economic, language proficiency, social/emotional, and health). The Cluster program also serves Seminar students not enrolled in Seminar programs.

Students score at the 99.9<sup>th</sup> percentile on the Raven Progressive Matrices and students who score at the 99.6<sup>th</sup> to 99.8<sup>th</sup> percentile with one or more factors are served by the Seminar program.

In the 2004-2005 school year, 22,500 students in grades 3-12 identified as Gifted and Talented students were enrolled in San Diego City Schools: 18,903 Cluster students; 4,018 Seminar students.

Cluster programs exist in 146 schools, including 101 elementary schools; 23 middle/junior high schools; 17 high schools (including two small schools at the re-designed San Diego High School Complex, and two small schools at the Kearny High School Complex); and five atypical schools. Fifty schools, located in all quadrants of the city, offer Seminar programs. Magnet schools, each with a particular focus, maintain both Cluster and Seminar classes to serve identified students' special interests and talents, e.g., the School of Creative and Performing Arts.

Students access GATE programs within their resident pattern and outside of their resident pattern through the Voluntary Ethnic Enrollment Program, the CHOICE program, magnet schools, School Improvement Program, and acceptance into a Seminar program.

To meet the needs of GATE students, teachers assigned to grades 3-12 GATE classes are required by the district to be GATE certified. Currently, 2,248 of the 9,044 San Diego City Schools certificated staff are GATE certified. GATE certification classes are offered in conjunction with San Diego State University. The program is directed by Associate Dean Dr. Margie Kitano, a nationally recognized leader in Gifted and Talented Education. The university instructor is Ms. Elinor Smith, a highly respected educational consultant in Gifted and Talented Education. The certification instruction provides teachers with skills and strategies necessary to provide a differentiated curriculum which meets or exceeds State academic content standards.

K-2 teachers may access district certification and other GATE professional development opportunities on a space-available basis. K-2 teachers and parents are included in professional development opportunities through invitations to site and district GATE informational meetings and to the Distinguished Lecture Series in Gifted and Talented Education.

The intellectual component of GATE classes at school sites is designed to meet or exceed State academic content standards and is described in the GATE plans which schools submit each year to the GATE department. Site plans provide a balance between cognitive and affective learning and address the social and emotional needs of gifted students. School site plans are composed of five parts: The teacher roster, which indicates teacher GATE certification and assignment; the GATE Program Summary, which describes the site plan for addressing each of the eight GATE State Standards; the Accountability Plans, completed by each GATE teacher or departmental which describes the differentiation that will be provided in the classroom for GATE students; the End of the Year Report, which reflects on the effectiveness of the implementation of the plan and projects changes for the following year; and the site GATE budget, which incorporates anticipated budget expenditures for the year. The GATE plans require the signature of the principal and parent representative to the GATE District Advisory Committee. A significant amount of GATE funding received from the State is apportioned to the GATE sites based on the number of identified students. The district budgets a significant contribution from the general fund to the supplement State GATE grant.

The GATE department composed of GATE psychologists, resource teachers, one alternative education Seminar teacher, classified positions, and a program manager implements the district GATE plan approved by the Board of Education and provides continuing support to the 146 GATE Cluster and 50 Seminar programs.

The GATE District Advisory Committee (DAC) and the GATE Program Governance Team (PGT) review the district State Application before submission to the Board of Trustees for approval. All of these documents are available to the public upon request. District GATE procedures are contained in the district procedures manual, updated periodically, and available online.

The GATE Program Governance Team is a small group composed of parents and educators. The GATE District Advisory Committee is composed of representatives from all GATE schools. PGT meets on a monthly basis. DAC meets once a month. Both disseminate information and provide input and recommendations on important departmental issues requiring decision and action, including program planning and assessment. In 2003-2004, 49 parents, teachers, and administrators representing 50 Seminar programs participated in the Seminar Task Force Review. In 2004-2005, 72 parents, 164 teachers, and 89 administrators representing 124 GATE schools participated in the Cluster Task Force Review.

**1:2 The program provides administrative groupings and structures appropriate for gifted education and available to all gifted learners.**

**San Diego City Schools offers Seminar and Cluster GATE programs.**

**Seminar Program**

Seminar classes, designed to meet the needs of the highly gifted, are maintained at a 20 to 1 student/teacher ratio. Enrollment is by application, with priority status for resident students. The district Seminar program can accommodate all Seminar-identified students who apply; however, placement may not be possible in each student's first choice school. Parents must supply transportation to Seminar schools, if needed. Some magnet school transportation is available. (Please see Attachment A, Seminar Booklet 2004-2005.)

Specially trained GATE certified teachers conduct each class. They are committed to providing a faster pace of learning; appropriately rigorous depth and complexity; and differentiated curriculum in content, process, and product, utilizing flexible grouping within the classroom to meet student needs and abilities. In cooperation with the Special Education Department, the district offers two learning disabled/Seminar classes, one at the elementary level and one at the middle school level. The Seminar teachers are certified both for GATE and Special Education.

In cooperation with The Human Development Foundation, an OPEN GATE Seminar program is offered at three elementary schools. Economically disadvantaged Seminar-identified students may qualify for the OPEN GATE program, which provides trained tutors for students and translators to assist parents in communicating with the school.

The San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts provides a Seminar program, a Cluster program and, through auditions, identifies and serves students with talent in the creative, visual, and performing arts.

An Alternative Education Seminar teacher provides individual interventions for Seminar students enrolled at six alternative education sites.

**Cluster Program Models and Descriptions**

The Board of Trustees adopted five GATE Cluster class models in 1998. In 2002, a committee of teachers, administrators, parents, and GATE personnel combined these models into four and revised the model structures to meet new State legislative requirements for differentiation in core subjects throughout the school day. The models were reviewed and revised in 2005 by the Cluster Task Force Review Advisory Committee. Three models were selected to remain; a site-designed professional development component and specific language identifying the four core subjects were added to all models. Each school's personnel select a model that fits their needs. Models include percentages of identified students, qualifications for non-identified students in Cluster classes, and accountability requirements. One model provides for an Individualized GATE Plan for specific students. Schools indicate the model selected for each class in the School Program Summary and

the Accountability Design for Differentiated Instruction. The plans are on file for parent, community, and staff review at the site and GATE Office.

**TRADITIONAL CLUSTER (2003-2004 MODEL A, re-designated Model T)**

The Traditional Cluster model provides that 50 percent or more of the students are to be GATE identified, with any remaining openings to be filled with those students who score in the upper 10 percent on State standardized tests or on the Raven (high ability) or other district accepted intelligence test. This model takes the following forms: Full day four core subject Cluster class in elementary; multiple-period four core classes in 6th grade, middle school; four core class periods in middle and high school course offerings. Note: at the secondary level the principal may use his/her discretion in the placement of additional Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) students in the unfilled places remaining in the class (procedure adopted 3/23/99).

**DIVERSITY CLUSTER (2003-2004 MODEL B, re-designated Model D)**

The diversity Cluster model provides that 25 percent or more of the students in a class are identified as GATE with remaining openings to be filled by students who reflect the diversity of the school population. Full day four core subject Cluster class in elementary; multiple-period four core classes in 6th grade, middle school; four core class periods in middle and high school course offerings. An Accountability Plan for Differentiated Instruction is in place describing how and what modifications take place in all four core subjects to ensure that the needs of the students are being met throughout the school day.

**INDIVIDUALIZED GATE PLAN- IGP (2003-2004 MODEL D, re-designated Model I)**

The IGP model is designed for schools with very small populations where grouping could be counterproductive. An IGP - Individualized GATE Plan – is created for the four core subjects for each GATE identified student and placed on file in both the site office and GATE Office along with the Program Summary. All plans are reviewed by the GATE Office and may be returned for modifications if deemed necessary.

**1:3 The program is articulated with the general education programs.**

All GATE teachers in City Schools receive the district-wide training in literacy and mathematics and are responsible for providing the GATE students with the skills and content required of all students. The method by which they deliver these skills and content may vary; however, all GATE students are expected to meet or exceed the State and district content standards represented in district curriculum maps designed for each K-12 core subject area.

The San Diego Unified District GATE Department has a full-time program manager with pedagogical, theoretical, and empirical expertise and experience in GATE who is responsible for the implementation of the Board-approved GATE program and oversight of the GATE budget allocations. The manager directs a staff of one part-time and 12 full-time employees, 26 hourly employees, and 35 consultants who offer specialized expertise through 115 programs. Sites budget for consultant fees in their GATE plan.

The psychologists, who are assigned specific schools each year, work with individual students and families, as well as with site counselors, teachers, and administrators, to provide appropriate counseling support for GATE students.

The staffs of each school structure and sequence their curriculum between, within, and across grade levels; however, articulation between elementary and middle/junior high and between middle/junior high and high school has been spotty. From October 2004 through February 2005, 86 administrators, 174 teachers, and 68 parents representing 124 schools with GATE programs participated in a feeder pattern Cluster Task Force Review and made recommendations for

improving GATE programs. The consensus emerging from every feeder pattern was to build GATE vertical teams K-12 within high school feeder pattern to strengthen articulation of GATE programs.

The GATE Department is working with middle/junior high and high school staffs to form vertical teams in core content areas for each feeder school pattern. The goal is to have functioning vertical teams in all feeder schools, including elementary, for complete scope and sequence planning from elementary through high school by 2006-2007.

## **SECTION 2: IDENTIFICATION**

**The district's identification procedures are equitable, comprehensive, and ongoing. They reflect the district's definition of giftedness and its relationship to current State criteria. (EC Section 522022; Title 5 Regulations, Section 3822)**

### **2:1 The nomination/referral process is ongoing and includes students K-12.**

In 1998, the San Diego Unified School District Board of Trustees adopted a policy of universal testing for all students, grades 2 through 7. Beginning in the fall of 1998, all second graders whose parents sign permission slips to be tested are administered the Raven Progressive Matrices instrument by district GATE psychologists. Universal testing bypasses a nomination process which may be biased and incomplete and may fall short of the equitable process demanded by the San Diego City Schools GATE Department goals and objectives. A score between the 95<sup>th</sup> and 98<sup>th</sup> percentile may qualify a student for the Cluster (gifted program), and a score between the 99.6<sup>th</sup> and 99.9<sup>th</sup> percentile may identify a student for the Seminar (highly gifted program). Currently students are reviewed again at grade 5 or grade 7 to allow for improved changes in development. All students who are new to the school district in grades 2 through 7 are tested in the school year in which they enroll. While no formal identification occurs of K-1 students, opportunities for K-1 teachers to learn how to recognize gifted traits and serve the needs of young, gifted students are being expanded.

The Raven Progressive Matrices is currently judged by many professionals to be the most equitable instrument available for identifying intellectually gifted bilingual, learning disabled students and culturally diverse populations. It allows the program to identify students of all ethnicities that reflect their populations within the district. Although not a perfect testing instrument, it allows for equal access and more equitable identification procedures. The ethnic breakdown of identified students from 1986 to 2003 is contained in Attachment B. The test was chosen as the district's main instrument after three years of research to determine the best and fairest measure. The search continues on a less formal basis to seek out any test that may be preferable to the Raven Progressive Matrices. Current research includes looking at the California Standards Test as part of the identification and retesting processes.

Additional information is used in identification of students with special circumstances (factors), as well as for additional categories of giftedness (High Achievement and Specific Academic). Factors include environmental, economic, language, emotional, and health issues that may depress a child's score. If a parent or student advocate feels the Raven is not considered an appropriate instrument for identification purposes, an application may be made to the GATE Test/Retest Committee, which meets regularly, for the use of an alternative instrument. Special arrangements are made for the visually impaired. Interpreters are used for giving test directions to English Language Learners and the hearing impaired. The district has been using the Raven since 1991 and, as a result, has significantly increased the identification of under-represented groups.

School principals arrange an optimal environment for group testing. Schools are encouraged to schedule separate teacher and parent meetings prior to testing to inform teachers and parents about

the characteristics of gifted students, the purpose of testing, the instrument itself, and the testing process of students. Many schools conduct such meetings and invite all teachers and parents, including grades K-2, even though the formal testing process does not take place until grade 2.

**2:2 An assessment/identification process is in place to ensure that all potentially gifted students are appropriately assessed for identification as gifted students.**

The GATE testing takes place in grades 2 and 5 and grade 7. GATE testing requires a parent permission signature in all cases. First-time testing includes all second-grade students and all newcomers to the school district, grades 3 through 7. Students who are not newcomers but were not tested previously are tested at grade 5 and/or grade 7. These grades were chosen to allow for the development of the child and for identification before middle or high school.

A GATE psychologist reviews the records of students who have been enrolled in a Gifted and Talented program in other districts. Under normal circumstances, the student is enrolled in a GATE class while the case study is prepared. The district does not accept scores from a privately administered intelligence test. Testing must be part of the official school record.

Students' life circumstances that could reasonably be expected to depress the demonstration of full potential on the testing instrument must be documented by a GATE psychologist or on letterhead by the professional involved with the student. Special consideration is given in the following areas: environment, economics, language, and emotional and physical health.

A case study file is maintained for each identified student which includes the following: a copy of the identification letter sent to the parent containing the student's qualifying score (available for duplication when requested in writing with parent signature); the parent signature granting testing permission, permission to identify, and adherence to pre-testing ethics; official evidence of factor presence, a characteristics checklist for parents to complete about their child; and, in many cases, a student characteristics checklist scale completed by the teacher. Identification letters are provided in four major languages. Scores for all students are kept on file.

Retesting of students who were not identified or who were identified for Cluster and wish to be retested for Seminar qualification must meet specific retest requirements. Any request for a retest not meeting these requirements must be presented to the GATE Test/Retest Committee for decision. Detailed testing/retesting requirements are provided in the Parent Program Booklet.

Once testing is completed, parents are notified of the results by letter. A program booklet delineating all aspects of testing and program options is distributed. In the case of a Seminar identified student, an additional booklet is provided with Seminar program descriptions and the application process timeline. Notices of meetings and learning opportunities for parents are also included.

Task forces/study groups periodically review all aspects of the GATE district program, including identification, for revision in light of current research and changing district needs.

**2:3 Multiple service options are available within the gifted education program and between other educational programs. Placement is based on the assessed needs of the student and is periodically reviewed.**

District meetings for newly identified students' families are held in a centrally located location on two dates during the year. These meetings present comprehensive information about gifted students' characteristics and needs, including social and emotional; district gifted philosophy and programs; and procedures for accessing appropriate programs. Parents are notified of these meetings via the official identification letter, program booklet, and through flyers and notices. The San Diego City

Schools GATE web site also provides current information on meetings and opportunities for parents, district employees, and community members. Parent written permission is required for student to take the Raven Progressive Matrices. Signed parent permission is required to participate in the Seminar program and is provided on the Seminar application. Enrollment, registration, and course selection forms at the secondary level, provide parent written permission.

To serve the student with particular interests or talents, there are Cluster and Seminar programs in special-emphasis magnet schools. For dual-identified highly gifted students, there are elementary and middle school Seminar classes to serve their unique needs.

A reassessment of the student's needs is a regular part of the transition from elementary to middle/junior high school, and from middle/junior high school to senior high. According to GATE district Administrative Procedure 4236, students are removed from a class for the gifted only after extended conferences, interventions and only with the parent's agreement that the academic program is not meeting the student's needs at that time. A student never loses his or her identification as a gifted student and may enter or re-enter the gifted program at any time during the student's academic career.

If a student moves to a GATE program in another district, copies of all assessment results will be forwarded at the written request of the parent.

### **SECTION 3: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

**Districts develop differentiated curriculum, instructional models and strategies that are aligned with and extend the State academic content standards and curriculum frameworks. The differentiated curriculum is related to theories, models, and practices from the recognized literature in the field. (EC 52206a and 52206b)**

**3:1 A differentiated curriculum is in place, responsive to the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted students.**

The differentiated curriculum in place in 146 SDCS schools is governed by Administrative Procedure 4236, revised September 13, 2004 which mandates that instruction:

- respond to the needs of Cluster students who possess unique patterns of characteristics and to Seminar students who are divergent thinkers;
- place greater emphasis on independent study to allow time for students to pursue passions and interests;
- require advanced, challenging, and extraordinarily high-level curriculum that is aligned with and exceeds State content standards; and
- differentiate the content, process, and product of instruction in accordance with principles set forth by Passow, Tomlinson, and the State of California.

The scope and sequence for K-12 education in San Diego Unified is aligned with State standards and unified through SDCS common curricular maps and units of inquiry for literacy, social studies, science, and mathematics. Building upon this foundation, GATE teachers are trained to extend and differentiate the core instruction utilizing the theories of Carole Ann Tomlinson, Sandra N. Kaplan, and Joseph S. Renzulli. For example, when examining the text forms and features of autobiography GATE teachers might add depth by examining the author's life in terms of the underlying principle of how society at the time may have impacted the life of the author. A consideration of how the author's life changed over time might add complexity. Through GATE certification classes, teacher and task force meetings, and lectures offered by nationally recognized leaders in GATE education, teachers are taught to accelerate using the Renzulli model, to adapt the level of abstract thinking and big ideas of the content area according to Carole Ann Tomlinson's Equalizer, and to empower students to construct novel meaning and to internalize learning as required by State law. In

addition, GATE professional development also addresses and promotes an understanding of the social and emotional needs of gifted children. The result is a comprehensive curriculum that balances cognitive and affective learning.

All SDCS GATE schools submit a Program Summary and Accountability Plan designed by the GATE central office staff. The plans require proof that sites are providing GATE students with differentiated curriculum and instruction, opportunities for continuous progress, and interaction with intellectual peers. Accountability plans ask teachers to attach assignments that demonstrate the use of learning theories and strategies for differentiation appropriate for the needs, interests, and abilities of gifted learners. Indeed, SDCS schools' Accountability Plans reveal evidence of differentiated instruction. For example, elementary GATE students who show 90% mastery of material on a unit assessment are offered self-directed study contracts to conduct research on local rocks and minerals by contacting U.S. Department of Agriculture or by writing a letter to the U.S. Geological Survey. Elementary language arts students develop ethical standards by reading biographies such as *The Value of Honesty: The Story of Confucius* and making a live presentation. Elementary social studies students do research, read aloud, write poetry, and produce a play for parents and other classes examining the big idea of dangerous human risk as undertaken by the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Students next draw parallels to modern-day risk-taking and ponder what might be different about life and history had Lewis, Clark and others not taken the risk. Finally, elementary math students have devised and carried out fundraising projects to purchase food for the needy. Such differentiated experiences not only offer students developmentally appropriate learning but also foster sensitivity, responsibility to others, and willingness to contribute to society.

Professional development in SDCS gives both elementary and secondary GATE certified teachers a repertoire of research-based instructional strategies including Hilda Taba's knowledge categories, problem based learning, Socratic Seminar, and Sandra Kaplan's models for depth and complexity. Thus, middle school social studies students inquire into patterns of the causes of tolerance as revealed through different eras and cultures. Students demonstrate meaning through a variety of authentic and appropriate products including nonfiction, interpretive poetry, and original dance, music, and artwork. At the high school level, the core curriculum is compacted to avoid redundancy in Honors and AP courses where core curriculum is enriched and extended to better meet the needs, interests, and abilities of the gifted. Teams of teachers integrate the history, literature, and arts of Western and non-Western cultures within two-hour Humanities blocks. These alternative environments afford opportunity for critical thinking, creativity, metacognition, debate, self-awareness, and development of a personal code of ethics. For example, students might engage in a Socratic Seminar on Shaar's essay, "A Case for Patriotism," or take the role of a formalist or deconstructionist literary critic.

From October 2004 to February 2005, teachers, administrators and parents worked in Cluster Task Force vertical teams to share assignments such as those included herein and to evaluate and align differentiated instruction. They found common ground in complex curriculum dealing with ambiguous issues and problems which students could connect to their own lives. All eight regional task force groups representing the 146 GATE schools in SDCS recommended continuing vertical teaming to further articulate the scope and sequence of K-12 GATE education in the content areas as a top priority. Increased professional development opportunities were recommended, so teachers may review and keep current on such suggested topics as the brain-research of Howard and Jensen regarding optimal levels of challenge and process skills as articulated by Marzano and Wiggins and McTighe. The GATE central office staff plans to improve school Accountability Plans by providing a rubric, offering timely feedback, requiring clearer articulation between the core content standard and differentiated performance, and by posting site Program Summaries and Accountability Plans online.

### **3.2 The differentiated curriculum for gifted students is supported by appropriate structures and resources.**

Since GATE professional development in SDCS stresses the varied and often asynchronous development of GATE students, teachers are able to provide for individual differences in GATE students while simultaneously differentiating curriculum for groups of GATE students. The district recognizes the needs of gifted students during every facet of the school day, and a majority of San Diego GATE classrooms are structured to consist of a minimum of 25% GATE students with the remainder of the class representing the diversity of the school community. Hence, SDCS teachers are trained in appropriate models to meet the needs of gifted students grouped within the regular classroom. Through classes and workshops, teachers learn to differentiate curriculum at their own pace; they move from offering choices, collaborative learning, and open-ended activities to tiering, mentorships, and independent study. GATE teachers are taught to align instructional strategies with both State standards and the developmental needs and abilities of gifted students utilizing Sandra Kaplan's Frames and Depth and Complexity ICON cards. For example, middle school students are asked to address Social Studies Standard 7.11.1 on the Age of Exploration from the point of view of a trader living in the 1500's who must decide whether or not to go to the New World thereby incorporating a Kaplan dimension of complexity. In constructing this assignment, a teacher next incorporates problem-based learning by requiring an investigation into pros and cons of the voyage. Finally, the teachers conduct a whole-class Socratic Seminar to debrief by considering insights into the time period and by making connections to the central theme of an interdependent world. Many such examples are found within the Accountability Plans of San Diego teachers, which clearly incorporate both individual and group learning opportunities.

Differentiated curriculum in San Diego is supported by technology and appropriate materials; indeed, multiple and varied print and non-print sources for inquiry is the norm. For instance, three resources are required for the Age of Exploration assignment referenced above and the use of Webquest is suggested. In another example, a middle school Renaissance period assignment incorporates and blends video productions of Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet; novels by Jane Yolen, Gary Soto, and Rosemary Sutcliffe; musical chants by the Benedictine Monks; paintings by Martin Friedman and Michael Wright; and six web sites for Shakespearean research. Additionally, GATE students utilize technology to make presentations, create original publications, produce videos and original music and create class web sites; they monitor grades and receive and send assignments online.

San Diego Unified School District GATE Accountability plans list an extensive range of resources used by teachers to augment differentiated curriculum and to supplement independent study. Elementary students join book clubs, are taught by Border Voices guest poets, learn Greek and Latin roots to create word walls, take field trips to the Marine Science Laboratory, work with Foss Science Kits, and discuss current topics to develop critical thinking using Time for Kids and California Studies Weekly. Middle-grade students are offered Nimble with Numbers, graphic organizers, Newsweek, selected biographies of scientists, philosophers, and artists, A People's History of the United States, [www.aaamath.com](http://www.aaamath.com), and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Resources at the high school level include Shakespeare, The Invention of the Human by Harold Bloom, primary documents, Erikson's psychosocial dilemmas, the Classroom Screenplay Library, water and terrestrial test kits provided by the San Diego Water Authority, novels written in Spanish, Latin, and French, and works of Chinese philosophy.

The four program models available for selection by individual San Diego schools and, in some cases, by individual teachers within a school offering GATE services, allow for the provision of differentiated curriculum in a variety of teaching and learning patterns: large and small group instruction within a grade level or class, homogeneous and heterogeneous grouping, teacher- and student-directed learning, and opportunities for the development of an Individualized GATE Plan

(IGP) for specific students. San Diego classrooms are marked by a regular rhythm and blend of whole-class preparation and review, and individual or small-group exploration and practice, because teachers district-wide are carefully trained to present mini lessons, allow for breakout groups, and follow with whole-class debriefing. Students and teachers collaborate and reflect within a flexible learning community.

School site Accountability Plans assure continuity and comprehensiveness of learning and align differentiated instruction with district curriculum maps that specify themes and units, objectives and State standards, essential questions, and formative and summative assessment. Together the site plans and district curricular maps provide for continuous progress of GATE students, which is commensurate with their abilities, needs, and passions.

The SDCS GATE program curriculum is built upon a heritage of leadership in GATE education, a foundation of enduring knowledge clearly articulated in State standards, a comprehensive program of professional development for teachers offered through the school district and San Diego State University, and an enduring commitment to fostering high potential in all students.

#### **SECTION 4: SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**The Districts establish and implement plans to support the social and emotional development of gifted learners to increase responsibility, self-awareness, and other issues of affective development. (EC52212a1)**

##### **4:1 Actions to meet the affective needs of gifted students are ongoing.**

The 1998 Board-adopted definitions of Cluster and Seminar classes in San Diego City Schools clearly articulate the requirement that all GATE classes must address the social and emotional needs of the students. Teachers who accept a GATE class must be prepared to create a classroom environment designed to incorporate techniques to support affective learning.

Each year, certification classes, workshops, parent study groups, and evening lectures featuring nationally acclaimed speakers, provide parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators, with information and training regarding the characteristics of gifted learners and their related social and emotional development and needs. Of the 7,000 teachers in San Diego City Schools, 2,248 are GATE certified. All GATE certified teachers have received training in the characteristics of gifted students and strategies for addressing the social and emotional needs of the gifted. It is understood that this training is integral to the success of the GATE classroom teacher and therefore an essential aspect of San Diego City School's GATE certification classes.

The GATE Department sponsors two district-wide meetings for parents of newly identified students. The focus of these meetings is to inform parents of the characteristics of gifted children; their social, emotional, and intellectual needs; the programs available in the district to serve them; and ways to access GATE programs in City Schools.

The GATE Department's psychologists' primary responsibility is student identification for GATE; however, they do, on occasion, work with classes as well as individual students, on social and emotional issues. They meet with individual student's parents when the need arises and work with site personnel to see that students receive referrals to community agencies when appropriate. Consultations with teachers are conducted throughout the school year. Approximately ¼ of the psychologists' time is spent in telephone conversations or e-mail exchanges to help parents and teachers to meet the needs of gifted children.

Most schools schedule separate teacher and parent meetings prior to testing to inform both groups about the testing instrument and process as well as to provide a general discussion of characteristics

of gifted children, including social and emotional aspects of the gifted personality. The school's GATE psychologist is often a part of this program, as are other GATE Department personnel.

School site parent meetings during the year often focus on the social/emotional needs of gifted children and intervention strategies available in the school, home, and community that are appropriate for at-risk gifted students. Clubs, academic competitions, and support groups are offered to attract gifted students into a wide range of activities, to help them to focus on healthy competition and to bring challenge into their lives. This augments and enhances what occurs in the classroom.

Underachievement is a prime concern and is addressed in a variety of ways. During 2004-2005, SDCS GATE teacher involvement in the National Research Center, University of Connecticut, Improving Achievement project has helped to view this dilemma from a new perspective. Interventions are taught to teachers who mentor and work closely with underachieving students on a one-to-one basis after matching the intervention with the diagnosis of the problem.

Five of the seven GATE psychologists have been trained in Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted (SENG) and have conducted parent groups in the past. The hope is to increase the department's capacity to provide SENNG groups for all interested parents.

The department-sponsored Distinguished Lecturer Series always includes one or more speakers a year who address the social and emotional needs of gifted children and adolescents. These lectures are free to the public and draw parents, teachers, administrators, and interested community members from San Diego and beyond. The lectures are well established and well known in the area as an excellent source of current information on all facets of giftedness and education of the gifted, including information about and interventions for at-risk gifted students.

Future plans include providing professional development on the social and emotional needs of gifted students to the GATE District Advisory Committee, district counselors, special education psychologists, GATE teachers, and GATE site team leaders for dissemination to interested individuals and groups. Brochures, newsletters, informational packets, and announcements of workshops and conferences will be posted on the GATE web site.

Some high schools designate GATE counselors who provide gifted students with counseling services appropriate for their needs. All high school counselors provide career and college information and assistance. Several schools offer mentoring programs that match GATE students with appropriate mentors in areas of interest, areas of weakness, and/or areas of special needs.

#### **4:2 At-risk gifted students are monitored and provided support (e.g. underachievement, symptoms of depression, suicide, substance abuse).**

GATE Teacher certification classes train teachers to recognize symptoms of at-risk behavior in gifted students, to initiate interventions when appropriate, and to refer the students to internal and external programs and agencies.

Nationally renowned speakers participating in the GATE Distinguished Lecture Series each year address at-risk behaviors and appropriate interventions for parents and school personnel to explore. Parents, teachers, administrators, counselors, and interested community members attend these lectures. A common language and knowledge base encourages increased communication and ensures greater success when addressing the social and emotional needs of the gifted.

The GATE psychologists work with school personnel and parents on at-risk student interventions, services, and referrals. The process usually begins with a site team meeting to review all aspects of the student's academic, social, and emotional profile. The site team can include the parents,

student, an administrator, all teachers, school nurse, counselor, GATE psychologist, and any other personnel appropriate to the at-risk issues under discussion. This meeting results in an intervention plan to initiate corrective measures by all appropriate personnel based on the student's unique needs. Ongoing monitoring to assess progress follows. No changes are made in the student's program without careful examination of all aspects of the situation and parents' agreement.

As per Policy 4236 of the District Procedures, at-risk students are defined as: underachieving/producing, double-labeled, nonconforming, divergent thinkers, English language learners, and profoundly gifted students [who] should receive counseling and support services. At-risk students are not dropped from the gifted programs without an intervention plan and a parent conference. A student never loses his or her identification as a "gifted student" and may enter or re-enter the gifted program at any time during the student's academic career.

GATE psychologists disseminate information on at-risk students at district and site parent/teacher meetings. Teachers, counselors, and administrators receive district-level training on how to make appropriate referrals to internal and external agencies when needed. A better understanding of the needs of gifted children aids counselors and administrators in serving them more efficiently and completely.

GATE resource teachers also speak at parent and school site meetings on social and emotional issues. They take the perspective of the teacher and suggest interventions to help both parents and teachers better understand the needs of gifted students.

## **SECTION 5: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Districts provide professional development opportunities related to gifted education to administrators, teachers, and staff to support and improve educational opportunities for gifted students. (EC 522212a1)**

**5:1 The district provides professional development opportunities related to gifted learners on a regular basis.**

San Diego City Schools District, in collaboration with San Diego State University, offers GATE certification to district employees, free of charge. Although teachers who are not certified but have been assigned GATE classes have first priority to enroll in SDCS GATE certification, other teachers, counselors, and administrators are welcome to participate for personal professional development on a space-available basis. Currently 2248 teachers are certified to teach gifted students; an additional 300 will be certified by June 2005. The San Diego Human Resources Department monitors the eligibility of all teachers assigned to GATE classrooms.

Other professional development opportunities available to all district personnel include:

- GATE-oriented training offered through the GATE Department, including district-wide, high school Cluster, and site presentations, as well as individual teacher consultations;
- Retired GATE teachers hired to support new Seminar and GATE teachers; plus the GATE department is also in the process of establishing a mentor program for GATE Seminar teachers;
- A GATE-sponsored, distinguished lecturers series that focuses on various aspects of gifted education (open to the public);
- GATE office sponsorship of GATE related conferences, such as the Advanced Placement Conference;

- GATE office sponsorship at a one-day, annual, area conference planned by the Association of San Diego Educators for the Gifted (ASDEG) featuring speakers, workshops, and a teachers' marketplace for curriculum and instruction ideas;
- The opportunity for schools to use GATE funds and/or PEP funds to support teacher participation in the California Association for the Gifted (CAG) conference;
- The GATE Handbook for Administrators, Teachers, and Parents, available at every GATE school site, containing state-of-the-art information on GATE curriculum, materials, and strategies;
- GATE Manual: Policies and Procedures, which includes instructions for managing the site GATE program and updated information on GATE curriculum, materials, and strategies.

**5:2 District personnel with direct decision-making and/or instructional responsibilities for gifted students are provided with role specific training.**

The San Diego City Schools GATE program and San Diego State University's Department of Special Education partner to offer two sections of SPED 644 (Working with Students Who Are Gifted) each fall and spring semester. Satisfactory completion of the course provides teachers with district GATE certification. Teachers have the option of taking the course for university credit, which can be applied to the University's graduate certificate and/or master's program in Developing Gifted Potential. Teachers may also apply to receive Discover credit, which moves them forward on the pay scale for San Diego City Schools. To meet the scheduling needs of as many teachers as possible, separate sections are offered on the SDSU campus and at a high school within the district, alternating each semester between Saturday morning and late afternoon/early evening sessions. Separate sessions are offered for elementary and secondary teachers.

Course content is correlated with defined competencies for teachers of the gifted and the standards for GATE programs. It is presented in a series of modules, each focused on a specific topic or instructional strategy: state GATE standards, characteristics of gifted students (including special populations such as double-labeled GATE students and Giftedness in Poverty), curriculum differentiation, and management and instructional Strategies (such as compacting, tiering, problem-based learning), Socratic Seminars, and thematic interdisciplinary curriculum. Additional topics include special populations (culturally and linguistically diverse, highly gifted, underachieving), independent study, and social/emotional development. A strong effort is made to integrate these strategies for the gifted with the district's literacy framework and with State content and performance standards. Participants are also required to attend district-sponsored, distinguished lecture presentations and/or local conferences on gifted and talented.

The certification program is coordinated by San Diego University Associate Dean Dr. Margie Kitano. A faculty member from SDSU (currently Elinor Smith) and two San Diego Unified GATE Resource Teachers (currently Dr. Rolena Jones – elementary and Karen Moffitt - secondary) collaboratively plan course content, materials, assignments, and assessment. They provide the instruction with the support of guest presenters from City Schools and SDSU. Instruction includes didactic presentations, small group interaction, hands-on practice, video and live demonstration. Participants are required to complete four graduate-level assignments that primarily involve planning, implementing, and reflecting on one of the instructional methods. Assignments are evaluated according to specifically designed rubrics. Participants have the opportunity to revise assignments that do not meet established criteria for passing. The district certifies only those participants who complete assignments at the passing level of 80%, as well as completing 30 hours of classroom instruction and 4½ hours at a GATE conference or at the Distinguished Lecture Series. Teachers who do not satisfactorily complete certification are reassigned to non-GATE classes as soon as practical.

The course text (*Working with Gifted and Talented Students and Their Families*) consists of current professional readings selected by instructors to support each module. Readings are organized by module in a loose-leaf binder and include a description of each assignment as well as the scoring rubric and criteria for passing. This handbook also contains readings of interest to specific groups of participants, such as secondary science and mathematics teachers. For participants taking the course for university credit, instructors videotape the strategy implementation and students receive peer coaching. GATE Department personnel provide follow-up for other class members on a time-available basis. As warranted, videotapes are edited and used in lectures. Materials also include commercial videotapes.

Although there is a limit to the number of persons each class can accommodate and teachers currently assigned to GATE classrooms receive first priority, the opportunity for certification or professional development is offered to all K-12 teachers, counselors, and administrators on a space-available basis. Experienced teachers are especially encouraged to update their skills through participation in all available professional development opportunities. As a result of the Cluster Task Force Review, more Discover credit courses will be planned for the 2005-2006 school year. The courses will be aimed at experienced GATE teachers and will be taught by both outstanding classroom teachers and the GATE staff. The focus will be on updating skills and on taking skills to the next level of GATE rigor.

Evaluation of outcomes and needs assessment for teachers of the gifted is an on-going processes throughout the year, conducted by site team leaders, district office personnel, and certification leaders. Yearly, GATE team leaders and Seminar teachers fill out a needs assessment, and each member of the GATE certification class completes an evaluation. Sites also determine their own needs and call the GATE department to provide the professional development requested. Beginning in May 2005, the GATE office will also receive a yearly assessment showing the achievement data of GATE students and the impact of various Clustering models. During the 2004-2005 school year, there was a Cluster Task Force review team composed of 325 parents, teachers and administrators and representing 124 schools. The review was conducted in regional groups, and one of the areas evaluated was professional development. The committee made the following recommendations which will be implemented in 2005-2006:

- Provide mandatory professional development for administrators and counselors of schools with GATE programs at the Administrators Professional Development Conference.
- Coordinate and fund registration for teachers to voluntarily participate in appropriate GATE local conferences and workshops as district GATE funding permits.
- Provide voluntary professional development opportunities in Nurturing Gifted Potential in the Early Grades to K-2 teachers.

Cluster Task Force Reviews occur every 3 years. A Seminar Task Force Review is also on a 3-year cycle. In addition the GATE Program Governance team meets monthly to discuss current issues. All results are used to make improvements and for future planning.

Additional sources of certification are

- documentation of a Master's degree in Gifted Education;
- individual evaluation of documented training in gifted education by the GATE Program Governance Team, including the California Association for Gifted training opportunities;
- University of California and California State University certification programs.

## **SECTION 6: PARENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

**Districts provide procedures to ensure consistent participation of parents and community members in the planning and evaluation of programs for gifted students. (EC 52205 2f)**

## **6.1 Open communication with parents and the community is maintained.**

Parents are informed of the district's criteria and procedures for identifying gifted and talented students, the program options, and the learning opportunities available for identified students by both the GATE central office staff and by individual school sites. In 2004, the GATE central office staff completed a comprehensive page on the San Diego City Schools District web site. Posted online are copies of all informational documents and publications related to GATE education; these are also made available via U.S. mail, through school sites, and from the GATE office by request. Included on the Web site are all of the following, which are updated regularly:

- A list of GATE psychologist assignments to district schools to make parents aware of whom to contact regarding the identification of their child.
- A copy of the parent letter distributed prior to testing to explain procedures and request permission to test along with the Student/Parent Information form required at the time of testing.
- A description and overview of the Raven Progressive Matrices, the instrument used by SDCS GATE psychologists to identify students.
- Copies of SDCS Procedures and Policies governing GATE education in the district.
- The GATE Parent Program Booklet which contains comprehensive information about all aspects of the GATE program.
- The GATE Seminar Program booklet which contains descriptions of 50 school programs which are geographically distributed throughout the district: 21 at the elementary level (K-6), 17 at the middle level (6-9), 12 at the senior high level (9-12), two for gifted disabled students, and four alternative education sites.
- The Community Resource Booklet which provides resources to supplement the core and the differentiated curriculum.
- Seminar application and preference forms for elementary, middle, and high school levels.
- A master calendar of GATE department events.
- A copy of the Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate Board Report prepared by the GATE department.
- Copies of the school site plans will be posted in 2005-2006.
- Copies of the 2003-2004 Seminar Task Force Review and the 2004-2005 GATE Cluster Task Force and Program Governance Team Recommendations and State application will be posted upon review and approval by the Board of Education.

Also posted on the web site are announcements of the following meetings hosted by the GATE central office staff to educate and orient parents of students identified as gifted and talented and to inform and update them regarding the program and its implementation:

- Two meetings are held each year to provide parents with in-depth information about the characteristics of gifted children; their special academic, social, and emotional needs; and detailed information about how to access GATE programs in City Schools. These meetings are very well attended with extensive question and answer sessions following the formal presentations. Translators are provided for the major languages of the district population at the meetings, and letters provided in the four major district languages announcing the meetings are sent to all parents of newly-identified gifted students.
- Six meetings are held annually to explain the Seminar application process to parents of Seminar students who are newly identified or articulating between elementary, middle/junior, and high school. Meetings are held in a variety of locations on several different dates throughout the year. Hosted by the GATE Senior Psychologist and a resource teacher, these meetings review identification procedures, provide updated program options, clarify district-wide factors governing acceptance into Seminar programs, and foster open communication through a questions and answer session.

- Three annual lectures by nationally recognized leaders in GATE education, such as Del Siegle, Dr. Sandra Kaplan, and Dr. James Delisle, are offered and made open to parents, teacher, and the public at no charge. Flyers for these lectures are distributed broadly throughout the district. Lectures provide excellent information on topics such as underachieving GATE students, the social and emotional needs of gifted children, working with at-risk GATE students, and adding rigor to both school and home environments.
- Periodic special task force meetings assembled to study specific GATE issues and to provide policy recommendations to the Superintendent and the Board. Recent task forces include the Cluster Task Force, October 2004 to February 2005, and the Seminar Task Force of January to March, 2005. Topics addressed by participants included GATE identification procedures, GATE Cluster class configuration, and placement of GATE Seminar centers. Such task forces are ad hoc in organization and assembled for a limited period of time. When a new task force is being assembled, the GATE central office issues a call for parent, administrator, and teacher nominees from all schools.
- The student GATE Web page provides links to contests, scholarships, and examples of student work will be showcased in the future.

School sites also host two or more meetings for parents of gifted students annually to explain the school's GATE program, to introduce GATE teachers and their curriculum plans, to inform parents of where they can get additional help and information, and to allow parents of gifted students to develop contacts with each other. Many sites schedule an additional meeting of teachers and parents prior to testing with the Raven Progressive Matrices to inform both groups about the testing instrument and process as well as the intellectual, social, and emotional characteristics of gifted children. The school's GATE psychologist and other GATE central office staff are often a part of this program. Additionally, GATE parents often represent the views and concerns of GATE parents on School Site Councils or Site Governance Teams. At some school sites, GATE parents have formed their own GATE Governance committees. GATE issues not resolved through such venues can be referred to the district GATE Program Governance Team. Site parent meetings serve as venues to share the products and achievements of gifted students.

Through participation in meetings and committees such as those described above, GATE parents are actively involved in the ongoing planning and evaluation of the GATE program. For example, 68 parents took part in the 2004-2005 GATE Cluster Task Force Review. At sites, parents are involved in selecting the site's GATE model and reviewing the site's Program Summary and Accountability Plan. In September 2004, the GATE District Advisory Representative from each site was invited to attend the fall meeting of GATE site Team Leaders to learn of their responsibilities and of Accountability Plan requirements. The DAC Representative's signature is required on each site plan. Parents are involved in program evaluation and in reviewing the State application through two permanent advisory groups—the GATE District Advisory Committee (DAC) and the GATE Program Governance Team (PGT). The DAC is composed of representatives from the school sites that have GATE programs; the PGT is a small group composed of educators and two permanent parent members. Both groups serve as a sounding board for GATE issues and offer recommendations to the GATE coordinator and staff members on important decisions.

The GATE offices maintain three active community partnerships as follows:

- The Human Development Foundation supports the OPEN GATE Seminar program for economically disadvantaged Seminar students at Oak Park, Franklin, and Balboa Elementary Schools. The primary goal of the OPEN GATE program is to provide every eligible student with the resources necessary to reach their potential. District-identified Seminar students entering 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and qualifying for free or reduced lunch are eligible for the program. OPEN GATE seeks to increase students' reading and math scores and to assist parents to actively participate in their child's education. GATE psychologists work closely with the OPEN GATE director to identify students for this program.

- The San Diego Chapter of the Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA) encourages students to enter science and engineering careers and believes that a strong and creative technical workforce is essential to our future. AFCEA assists schools with computer availability and connectivity problems; arranges speakers for school career development programs; works to increase computer literacy and to provide job training and education; offers college scholarships to students majoring in science, math, or engineering; and awards grants to middle and high school science teachers for the purchase of consumable materials for science classes. In addition, members of the AFCEA partnership researched and compiled 37 pages of scholarships for students for posting on the SDCS GATE web site.
- The United States District courts provide local judges to be guest speakers in classrooms and at school assemblies through its program Judges in the Classroom.

Many GATE parents volunteer to assist at school sites. The GATE central office provides access to 115 programs offered by 36 community members to enrich and extend the core and differentiated curriculum. All are published online in a Community Resource Guide. Programs include: Einstein and the Black Fabric of Space; Invert Investigators, Kelp Forest Explorers, and Wetland Avengers: A Sea Series; Maya of Central America; SAT/PSAT Preparation; and African Rhythms: Dance and Drum.

### **6:2 An active GATE advisory committee with parent involvement is supported by the district.**

In addition to site GATE advisory committees, a GATE District Advisory Committee meets on the second Monday of the month. The committee is comprised of a parent representative from each school site solicited by the GATE Program Manager via principals. During 2004-2005, 128 school sites solicited representatives, and meetings have been well attended. Minutes of each meeting are distributed to all members. Efforts are made to supply all members with literature regarding the GATE program in San Diego along with upcoming lectures and conferences. Indeed, DAC representatives are considered a clearing house for GATE resources and information for parents at their respective sites.

The governance of DAC has been restructured to include a parent chair, a parent steering committee, and a liaison from the GATE central office. The Steering Committee meets at least three times annually to plan agendas and organizational strategies. The Steering Committee is organized by SDCS Board of Education sub-districts to better represent the demographics of the student population. Currently, the DAC Steering Committee has volunteers from four of five sub-districts of the city for the upcoming 2005-06 school year. The Steering Committee regularly brainstorms ways to solicit parents of special needs students, English language learners, and gifted disabled students. Once this new governance team is firmly underway, outreach to such groups will take high priority.

The mission of the DAC is to help parents, educators, and public decision-makers recognize, value, and support the abilities and talents of our gifted children and youth. To do this, DAC representatives:

- Gain knowledge about educational needs and quality programs for gifted students,
- Advocate for strong instructional programs and resources for gifted students,
- Take action to communicate with parents, teachers, and administrators about GATE issues, and
- Educate others about the special needs and educational programs for gifted students.

Collaboration between parents and the district GATE coordinator is integral to each monthly DAC meeting. A GATE Program Manager's report begins each meeting. In 2004-2005, the GATE coordinator kept parents up-to-date regarding important projects such as the GATE Cluster Task Force, an Underachievement Study in conjunction with the National Research Center for the Gifted, and progress on the State application. A round table and advisory session ends each meeting.

Cards are sometimes circulated among attendees to solicit issues for discussion and a parking lot was created to post concerns and suggestions.

The GATE coordinator also collaborates with the Steering Committee to offer parent education and professional development. For example, the DAC began its year with orientation and mentoring sessions for new representatives and a program on being an effective GATE advocate. The GATE coordinator has made it possible to hire consultants to train parents regarding the social and emotional needs of the gifted and to explain how differentiated curriculum extends and enriches the core curriculum.

The GATE District Advisory Committee has grown in strength during 2004-2005. It is moving forward to build active and more representative participation, to voice opinions on GATE policies and issues, and to solicit community support. 2005-2006 Steering Committee members will join

with the GATE Program Governance Team to review and cosign the district's State application and will meet in June to set objectives and make plans. During 2004-2005, DAC representatives have assisted in organizing GATE parent meetings and programs, written articles for school newsletters, encouraged parents to attend GATE lectures and events, and have served on the district Parent Congress and LEAP committees.

## **SECTION 7: PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**

**Districts establish formal and informal evaluation methods and instruments that assess the gifted program and the performance of gifted students (which meets or exceeds State content standards). Results of data collected, including State standardized tests, are used to study the value and impact of the services provided to improve gifted programs and gifted student performance. (EC 52212a1)**

**7:1 The district provides ongoing student and GATE program assessment that is consistent with the program's philosophy, goals, and standards.**

Ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the GATE programs in producing high achievement among the students served by the Cluster and Seminar classes, grades 3 through 12 has been a feature of the San Diego City Schools Gifted Program for over 30 years. A consistent thread for formative evaluations is the degree of parent and student satisfaction with all aspects of the GATE program and the programs effectiveness in meeting the State GATE Standards. Special areas of interest for periodic assessment and evaluation have included such topics as program design, identification procedures, mastery of basic skills, alignment of curriculum, differentiation of instruction, plans to address the social and emotional needs, effectiveness of staff development, and degree of parent involvement.

The district budget crisis has precluded the past practices of biennial parent/student surveys mailed to GATE households via U.S. mail which provided quantitative and qualitative information on levels of satisfaction with administrative, academic, social, and emotional components of the GATE program. Periodic evaluations provide data and analysis of such areas as graduation rates, the completion rate for UC a-f course requirements, AP participation and success, and second language re-designation. Experienced GATE staff members (including the administrator, psychologists, and resource teachers), DAC members, and PGT members examine the results of these evaluations. This close examination informs goal-setting, program planning, and budgeting for the following year. Annual evaluation reports are available from the GATE office upon request.

The formative assessments completed through the Seminar and Cluster Task Force Committees reveal both strengths and weaknesses and have always resulted in program revisions to improve

GATE delivery of curriculum, instruction, and services in City Schools. The GATE Department is charged by Administrative Procedure 4236 to review: GATE procedures, district and site GATE plans, and Seminar and Cluster GATE programs. The GATE application funding cycle drives the

review progress and Administrative Procedure 4236 called for a 2003-2004 review of the GATE Seminar, a 2004-2005 review of the Cluster program, as well as a June 15, 2005 submission of a new GATE grant application to the California State Department of Education for 2005-2008 funding. The California GATE State Standards mandate that formative and summative assessments be used to improve gifted programs.

### SITE BASED ASSESSMENTS

Individual students experience ongoing classroom teacher evaluation through a wide variety of assessment tools and methods to determine that the student is making appropriate progress toward meeting and exceeding the district and State standards. The program evaluation design is based on the collection and analysis of multiple, traditional and nontraditional indicators including annual examination of norm-referenced test scores; teacher-administered reading test scores; AP, SAT, and IB performance data.

GATE sites are required to hold at least one meeting per year for the purpose of program planning and evaluation. Sites submit in June to the GATE Department the End of the Year Report, a self-assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation of the GATE plan. The report also indicates anticipated changes for the following year. The results of these meetings are used for site planning purposes. Many sites also solicit evaluation input from parents and students through their own site-specific surveys.

The district has created curriculum maps for all four subject areas and Units of Inquiry/Study have been developed by teachers in collaborative study groups. The district has implemented protocols for assessment of student work in collaborative teacher study groups. GATE teachers participate in the design and implementation and differentiation of the Units of Inquiry/Study.

### FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS

#### Seminar Task Force Review- 2003-2004:

Administrative Procedure 4236 charged the GATE Seminar Task Force to review in 2003-2004 procedures for program identification and to make recommendations for adjustments, if necessary, to CPU allocations.

The Seminar Task Force, composed of administrators, teachers, and parents representing district Seminar programs, met on January 6, January 20, February 10, February 24, and March 2, 2004. The group reviewed regional needs, Seminar program alignment with the California State Standards for Gifted Education, district administrative procedures, and school requests for Seminar CPU allocations. Small work groups were formed by regional feeder patterns to review the regional Seminar programs needs. Regional Task Force representatives and the GATE Program Governance Team finalized the recommendations approved by the Board of Education on May 26, 2004.

The recommendations approved by the Board of Education were based on the premises that:

- All regions have sufficient numbers of identified Seminar students to warrant a strong regional elementary Seminar program.
- Growing strong regional programs begins with the elementary Seminar programs within the region.

- Without strong elementary programs the middle and high school regional Seminar programs languish.
- Elementary Seminar programs that retain the neighborhood Seminar students grow the region's secondary programs.
- Areas which lack strong elementary Seminar programs are the first priority in designing a Master Plan in each region to meet the present and future needs of Seminar-identified students within the region.
- Seminar students throughout the district retain the right to apply to and attend any district Seminar program that accepts the Seminar students through the adopted acceptance procedure.
- Seminar sites with few Seminar-identified students lack viability. To meet the needs of the Seminar-identified population within a region, locating the program at a more viable site is warranted.

The approved recommendations reflected the following factors which impact instructional programs: support for Seminar students, accommodations for student growth, the need to serve students throughout a high school feeder pattern, and the need to provide Seminar programs to Seminar-identified resident students within an articulation pattern.

Each high school feeder pattern within the district has sufficient numbers of Seminar-identified students at the elementary level to grow strong middle and high school Seminar programs if viable programs are offered within the high school feeder pattern. Vertical teaming among the feeder pattern elementary, middle, and high school Seminar teachers will promote collaboration and communication strengthening the ability of a region to retain and meet the present and future needs of their Seminar-identified students.

#### Cluster Task Force Review -2004-2005

The Cluster Task Force Review was facilitated by three GATE resource teachers, six GATE psychologists, and six adjuncts who formed eight leadership teams. Each team facilitated one of the eight Regional Cluster Task Forces composed of administrators, teachers, and parents representing district Cluster programs grades 3-12. The Task Forces met for five meetings in each of the eight regions from October 2004 to February 2005.

Schools participating in the San Diego City Schools GATE program, as well as schools aspiring to develop a GATE program, were invited to participate in this Cluster program formative assessment. A GATE parent, a GATE teacher, and an administrator from each school were invited to attend. In response to the invitation, 124 schools were represented by 325 participants (164 teachers, 72 parents, and 89 administrators) who attended one or more of the meetings. Ninety schools participated in three or more meetings. School representatives met in high school feeder pattern vertical teams (team members represented elementary, middle, and high schools within the feeder pattern) to review the Cluster programs' needs and to make recommendations for improving the GATE program within their school sites, the feeder patterns, and within the district. A handbook developed by the California Department of Education and the California Association for the Gifted, *Meeting the Standards: A Guide to Developing Services for Gifted Students*, and a presentation on each GATE Standard were provided to participants to direct the assessment of the site GATE Summary<sup>1</sup> and Accountability Plan's<sup>2</sup> alignment with the Standard. Each feeder pattern Task

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<sup>1</sup> The site GATE Program Summaries submitted each year provide information on the design of the program and GATE Cluster model selected, the number of students served by the program, teachers assigned to the GATE classes, the use of GATE funds, GATE curriculum, parent involvement, and the services provided to

Force presented a final prioritized list of recommendations for consideration by the joint Cluster Task Force Advisory Committee and the GATE Program Governance Team. The joint committee met to finalize the recommendations on January 26, February 23, March 10, and March 29, 2005. The GATE District Advisory Committee reviewed the report on March 14, 2005. The committee made recommendations concerning articulating the GATE programs within high school feeder patterns, providing for administrator, counselor, and teacher professional development, modifying Cluster program design and policies, modifying GATE identification policies, restoring GATE department staffing, and providing additional space for GATE department use. The recommendations were based on the following premises:

- A feeder pattern GATE vertical team, committed to the articulation of the GATE program within and across grade levels 3-12, provides a cohesive GATE program, and builds a college-going culture which benefits all students within the feeder pattern.
- Growing strong GATE programs within a feeder pattern requires principals and instructional leaders to be informed and committed to building GATE programs, assessing differentiated instruction, and providing time for GATE horizontal and vertical communication and articulation between elementary, middle, and high school administrators, GATE team leaders, teachers, counselors, and parents.
  - All San Diego City Schools high school feeder patterns have sufficient numbers of identified Cluster students to provide a continuum of GATE services and an articulated differentiated GATE curriculum in elementary, middle, and high school Cluster programs within each feeder pattern.
  - Articulated grades 3-12 GATE Cluster programs within a feeder pattern will build elementary Cluster programs and an academic community that retains the neighborhood Cluster students and grows the feeder pattern's secondary programs.
- The online availability of the GATE Summaries and Accountability Design Forms submitted by schools within a feeder pattern can provide parents, teachers, and administrators insight into the continuity of GATE services provided within the feeder pattern.
- Parent and community awareness of and involvement in a cohesive, articulated feeder pattern GATE program contributes to the retention and academic excellence of GATE students within the feeder pattern.
- Administrators, counselors, teachers, and parents knowledgeable of the California State Standards for Gifted and Talented Education and the appropriate strategies for delivering a differentiated curriculum provide the foundation for developing academic excellence and building strong GATE programs.
- To meet the needs of GATE students, professional development opportunities for teachers, counselors, and administrators and parent education and involvement opportunities must be provided at the school site within the feeder patterns and within the district.
- Modification of models and identification policies and procedures are appropriately made during the GATE Cluster review process.
- GATE personnel and facilities are needed to provide a continuum of GATE services to meet the needs of 146 schools with GATE programs.

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meet the social and emotional needs of GATE students. The plan submitted by the GATE team leader requires the signature of the principal and the parent representative to the GATE District Advisory Committee.

<sup>2</sup> The Accountability Plans are completed by the individual teachers assigned to GATE classes or by departmental teams. The plans describe examples of learning experiences and methods by which the teacher or department will provide differentiation of curriculum and instruction, opportunities for continuous progress, and interaction with intellectual peers in compliance with California State GATE Standards.

## SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

The scope of summative evaluations of the GATE program has varied from year to year depending on available personnel to conduct such a study. In recent years, district staff has provided data analyses on selected student performance indicators, while external review teams have conducted analyses of other program components. A new evaluation strategy was adopted during the

2004-2005 school year that expands former evaluation efforts to include a broad range of baseline data from 2003-2004 to which data in successive years will be compared. The study design is provided in Attachment D; see Attachment E for the formal evaluation report.

All schools participating in the Seminar and Cluster Task Force Reviews were provided the disaggregated GATE results from the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 California State Standards Testing and Reporting available on the California Department of Education Web site.

San Diego City Schools has embraced the concept of data-driven program improvement; therefore, requirements for individual school and district-wide data have increased exponentially in recent years. A yearly Advanced Placement Summative Assessment is provided to the Board of Education in the Advanced Placement Board report. The Standards, Assessment, and Accountability Department has a trained expert in gifted education assessment and analysis on staff. The GATE Department's program manager annually budgets funds to pay for comprehensive assessment and evaluation of the GATE program. Please see Attachment D.

The State application reviewed by the GATE District Advisory Committee (DAC) and the GATE Program Governance Team (PGT) and approved by the Board of Trustees, reflect the results of the department's yearly goals, objectives, and evaluation review.

### **SECTION 8: BUDGETS**

**District budgets for gifted programs support and provide for all the components of the district's GATE program and meet the related standards. (EC 52209, 5221a, 2, 3)**

**8:1 The district GATE budget is directly related to the GATE program objectives with appropriate allocations.**

San Diego City Schools District supplements the State funding with substantial district funds. In 2005-2006 the district portion of the GATE Department funding will total \$6,119,262. In addition to funds funding certification, supplies, equipment, contract services, consultants, this provides for 74 Seminar teachers and the central office GATE Department staff of 13 full-time employees. The department provides GATE student identification services to all district schools; and professional development, direct student services, and district-level coordination of the GATE program to 146 participating schools.

Ninety-three percent of the State funding is reallocated directly to school sites, based on the number of identified students, to support the GATE instructional program at each school. The annual site plan must include justification for GATE budget expenditures by linking expenditures to specific program components which supplement, not supplant, district funds spent on gifted learners. Schools are encouraged to provide some funding to address each GATE State Standard.

The district encourages fiscal collaboration between categorical programs. One of the two GATE resource teachers is funded by Title 2. GATE funds as well as general education funds are utilized to provide extensive GATE certification classes as well as other professional development opportunities throughout the year.

GATE certification is offered through a collaborative program with San Diego State University's School of Education. Four courses a year are offered, two in elementary and two in secondary certification. Each semester provides class sessions on Saturday morning at SDSU and sessions on a high school campus during the late afternoon and early evening. Classes are planned and conducted jointly by a university professor and a district GATE resource teacher supplemented by speakers and workshop leaders from gifted education professionals, both classroom and non-classroom.

Other professional development opportunities are based on needs assessments from a variety of sources; e.g., in 2004-2005, a full day, comprehensive workshop was organized by the GATE central office staff for teachers participating in the National Research Center for Gifted and Talented Improving Achievement Study. Other workshops on underachievement have been offered throughout the district. GATE funds provided release time for teachers to participate in the NRC G/T workshop. The GATE department funds participation in Advanced Placement and College Board conferences and plans to coordinate and fund registration for teachers to participate in appropriate GATE local conferences and workshops offered by local agencies a district GATE funding permits.

GATE funds support direct student services in a number of ways: consultants to provide depth, complexity, enrichment, extension, acceleration, and special programs focusing on unique student interests and passions; psychologists to identify GATE students, to work with students individually and in groups, and to facilitate access to services for special needs students (at-risk, twice-exceptional, and students with unusual social and emotional needs); and resource teachers to work with individual teachers and school staffs on improving curriculum and instruction.

GATE funding supports a full-time, highly experienced GATE program manager who is responsible for all aspects of the GATE program and the GATE budget. The GATE program manager has no other programmatic responsibilities. Psychologists responsible for testing approximately 15,000 students a year are funded through the general education fund.

There are no carry-over monies; no indirect costs are charged by the district to State GATE funds.

Site personnel coordinate services to categorically funded students to ensure that students eligible for more than one program do receive balanced services reflecting each student's needs in all categorical programs. The Second Language, Special Education, and Title I coordinators and teachers meet regularly to discuss each student's progress and to be sure the student is being well served in all eligible areas. The program managers for all categorically funded areas meet on an as-needed basis. The agenda for these meetings can contain fiscal coordination items for discussion.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Administrative Procedure 4235
- B. Administrative Procedure 4236
- C. Seminar Booklet
- D. Gifted and Talented Education Booklet (Parent Handbook)
- E. Racial/Ethnic Breakdown 1986 through 2003
- F. GATE Program Evaluation Report

SAN DIEGO CITY SCHOOLS  
OFFICE OF SCHOOL SITE SUPPORT  
INSTRUCTION AND CURRICULUM  
GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

RACIAL/ETHNIC STATISTICS  
1986 THROUGH 2003 SCHOOL YEARS

<u>Year</u>	<u>Non-White</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
2003 (10/03)	13,282 59%	9,172 41%	22,454	5,961 26.5%	9,172 41%	1,604 7.1%	1,384 6%	178 0.8%	164 0.7%	98 4.4%	2,175 9.6%	1,768 7.9%
2002 (10/02)	12,804 58.5%	9,095 41.5%	21,899	5,453 24.9%	9,095 41.5%	1,593 7.2%	1,287 5.2%	172 0.8%	152 0.7%	112 0.7%	2,298 10.5%	1,737 7.9%
2001 (8/01)	12,788 56.6%	9,809 43.4%	22,597	4,957 21.9%	9,809 43.4%	1,737 7.7%	1,242 5.5%	188 0.9%	166 0.5%	110 0.5%	2,566 11.4%	1,821 8.1%
2000 (10/99)	11,771 56.3%	9,137 43.7%	20,908	4,516 21.6%	9,032 43.2%	1,652 7.9%	1,150 5.5%	188 .9%	146 .7%	105 .5%	2,425 11.6%	1,694 8.1%
1999 (11/98)	12,060 55.6%	9,630 44.4%	21,690	4,425 20.4%	9,522 43.9%	1,887 8.7%	1,106 5.1%	195 .9%	152 .7%	108 .5%	2,538 11.7%	1,757 8.1%
1998 (6/98)	12,969 55.5%	10,405 44.5%	23,374	4,683 20%	10,405 44.5%	2,035 8.7%	1,200 5.1%	218 .9%	170 .7%	118 .5%	2,651 11.3%	1,894 8.1%
1997 (3/97)	11,340 54.3%	9,539 45.7%	20,879	3,924 18.8%	9,539 45.7%	1,872 9.0%	1,020 4.9%	196 .9%	152 .7%	101 .5%	2,444 11.7%	1,631 7.8%
1996 (4/96)	10,033 52.6%	9,032 47.4%	19,065	3,345 17.5%	9,032 47.4%	1,745 9.1%	904 4.7%	182 1.0%	124 .7%	82 .4%	2,198 11.5%	1,453 7.6%
1995 (3/95)	8,683 51.2%	8,286 48.8%	16,969	2,815 16.6%	8,286 48.8%	1,623 9.6%	822 4.8%	157 .9%	118 .7%	66 .4%	1,941 11.4%	1,141 6.7%
1994 (2/94)	8,333 49.4%	8,546 50.6%	16,879	2,732 16.2%	8,546 50.6%	1,592 9.4%	804 4.8%	148 .9%	119 .7%	61 .4%	1,849 10.9%	1,028 6.1%
1993 (3/93)	7,275 47.7%	7,972 52.3%	15,247	2,289 15.0%	7,972 52.3%	1,453 9.5%	700 4.6%	135 .9%	85 .6%	58 .4%	1,673 10.9%	882 5.8%
1992 (3/92)	6,128 44.4%	7,661 55.6%	13,789	1,830 13.3%	7,661 55.6%	1,262 9.2%	634 4.6%	96 .7%	76 .6%	55 .4%	1,448 10.5%	717 5.2%
1991 (2/91)	4,315 39.1%	6,723 60.9%	11,038	1,149 10.4%	6,723 60.9%	909 8.2%	528 4.8%	70 .6%	38 .3%	39 .4%	1,112 10.1%	470 4.3%
1990 (3/90)	3,697 36.4%	6,452 63.6%	10,149	909 9.0%	6,452 63.6%	757 7.5%	502 4.9%	62 .6%	30 .3%	37 .3%	1,017 10.0%	383 3.8%
1989 (2/89)	3,246 35.7%	5,845 64.3%	9,091	790 8.7%	5,845 64.3%	698 7.7%	474 5.2%	33 .4%	27 .3%	31 .3%	887 9.8%	306 3.4%
1988 (8/88)	3,137 35.4%	5,721 64.6%	8,858	784 8.8%	5,721 64.6%	674 7.6%	476 5.4%	31 .4%	22 .3%	28 .3%	840 9.5%	282 3.2%
1987 (8/87)	3,140 36.8%	5,828 65.0%	8,968	770 8.6%	5,828 65.0%	647 7.2%	473 5.3%	29 .3%	24 .3%	26 .3%	869 9.7%	302 3.3%
1986 (8/86)	2,741 33.4%	5,464 66.6%	8,205	673 8.2%	5,464 66.6%	572 6.9%	460 5.6%	18 .2%	20 .2%	21 .3%	721 8.8%	256 3.1%

R = Hispanic  
1 = White  
2 = Black  
3 = Asian

4 = American Indian/Alaskan Native  
5 = Pacific Islander  
6 = Portuguese  
7 = Filipino

8 = Indochinese